

Press Release

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School of Hotel and Tourism Management Entered into Strategic Partnership with HNA Hospitality Group in Support of Talent Development

The School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) and the HNA Hospitality Group (HNA) have recently come together to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate and work together in the areas of internship, scholarship, executive education and industry attachment in support of talent training and development.

The HNA Group is a fast expanding conglomerate headquartered in Haikou, Hainan, China. Founded in 1993, the Group has developed rapidly and internationally to encompass core businesses of aviation, hospitality, tourism, real estate, retail, finance, logistics, shipbuilding, eco-tech and entertainment. In their effort to adapt to an ever-changing and dynamic international environment, the Group looked to the SHTM to develop for their associates an advanced and specialised training and educational programme with a global perspective.

Held at the SHTM on 17 February 2017, the signing ceremony was presided over by Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of the SHTM and Walter Kwok Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, and Mr Carlo Schmed, Vice President of Operations of the HNA. In addition to SHTM students and staff members, those in attendance were HNA representatives including Mr Teppo Helles, Vice President of Human Resources; Ms Vivian Liu, General Manager of Operation and Mr Norman Lu, Vice General Manager of Human Resources and Administration; and representatives from the HNA Tourism Investment Group including Mr Clarke Xu, Vice President of Human Resources and Ms Yang Su, General Manager of Human Resources and Administration.

This strategic collaboration is in keeping with the two parties' common interests in enhancing the quality of talent training and development for the betterment of the industry. In the MOU, the School will provide HNA associates with executive education in the SHTM premises. Both parties will pursue collaboration of further training on the basis of mutual understanding and agreement. The two institutions will also work together in the area of student internship and scholarship, as well as industry attachment programme for SHTM faculty members. It is also agreed that both parties will organise seminars and workshops in areas of mutual interests. The MOU is signed for a period of three years.

“This MOU is a further step to strengthen our collaboration, reaffirming the industry’s support for us,” said Dean Kaye Chon. “While we are firmly behind the HNA’s talent development programme, this strategic partnership also provides an excellent channel for internship and industry attachment which our students and faculty members will need. We look forward to working more closely with our HNA counterparts in the years to come.”



Signing of Memorandum of Understanding: (from left) Mr Carlo Schmed of the HNA and Dean Kaye Chon of the SHTM



SHTM faculty members and HNA representatives after the MOU signing

About PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management

For over 35 years, PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management has refined a distinctive vision of hospitality and tourism education and become a world-leading hotel and tourism school. Ranked among top hotel and tourism schools in the world, the SHTM is a symbol of excellence in the field, exemplifying its motto of *Leading Hospitality and Tourism*.

With 70 academic staff drawing from 22 countries and regions, the School offers programmes at levels ranging from undergraduate degrees to doctoral degrees. In 2012, the SHTM was bestowed the McCool Breakthrough Award by the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (I-CHRIE) recognising its breakthrough in the form of its teaching and research hotel – Hotel ICON – the heart of the School's innovative approach to hospitality and tourism education. A member of the UNWTO Knowledge Network, the SHTM is also the editorial home of *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism* and *Journal of China Tourism Research*.

Press contact : Ms Pauline Ngan, Senior Marketing Manager
School of Hotel and Tourism Management

Telephone : (852) 3400 2634

E-mail : pauline.ngan@polyu.edu.hk

Website : www.polyu.edu.hk/htm